



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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To: District Manager, California Desert
Field Manager, Palm Springs-South Coast

From: State Director

Subject: Designation of Critical Habitat for Mexican Flannelbush

On September 27, 2007, the Fish and Wildlife Service published a final rule (*Federal Register* 72:54984-55010) determining critical habitat for Mexican flannelbush (*Fremontodendron mexicanum*). (See Attachment 1.) The final rule states that 228 acres of Mexican flannelbush critical habitat overlap with BLM administered land (145 acres in Cedar Canyon and 83 acres in Little Cedar Canyon). Both of these critical habitat subunits are located at Otay Mountain in San Diego County. The final rule also designated critical habitat for Vail Lake ceanothus (*Ceanothus ophiochilus*) in western Riverside County. However, there is no overlap of Vail Lake ceanothus critical habitat with BLM administered land.

Publication of this final rule imposes the substantive and procedural requirements of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act with respect to all discretionary BLM actions that “may affect” designated critical habitat for Mexican flannelbush. Effective October 29, 2007, we must comply with the interagency consultation procedures in 50 CFR 402.14 to ensure not only that any actions we authorize, fund, and carry out do not jeopardize the continued existence of the species, but also that they do not destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat. Ongoing or recently completed consultations on projects or land use plans that overlap designated critical habitat for Mexican flannelbush should be reviewed, and updated if appropriate, to ensure that critical habitat has been addressed.

Questions regarding this proposal may be directed to Ed Lorentzen at (916) 978-4646.

Signed by:
James Wesley Abbott
Associate State Director

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management

Attachment

- 1 - Final rule designating critical habitat for Vail Lake Ceanothus and Mexican Flannelbush
(27 pp.)

Distribution

WO-230 (Attn: Steve Lydick)
CA-610 (Attn: Larry LaPre)
CA-660 (Attn: Joyce Schlachter)